

by the end of the session we would have a list of probably £10,000,000 expected from revenue for current expenditure to meet the needs of the collective electorates. I appreciate the comments of members who have spoken, and hope that my explanation of the points raised has been explicit.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

In Committee of Ways and Means.

The House resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Marshall in the Chair.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That towards making good the supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending the 30th June 1943, a sum not exceeding £1,850,000 be granted out of Consolidated Revenue, £200,000 from the General Loan Fund, and £300,000 from the Public Account for the purpose of temporary advances to be made by the Treasurer.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

All Stages.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced, passed through all stages without debate and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 5.44 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 5th August, 1942.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2).

TRAFFIC ACT, ACCIDENTS.

Hon. G. B. WOOD asked the Chief Secretary: 1, How many traffic accidents have occurred in the metropolitan and suburban areas during the hours of darkness for the three months ended the 31st July? 2, How many fatalities resulted from such accidents? 3, How many people were injured?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Accidents occurring in the metropolitan area during the night-time for three months ended the 31st July were 372. 2, Fatalities arising out of such accidents—23. 3, People injured in such accidents—101.

RAILWAYS.

Standard Gauge, Kalgoorlie-Fremantle.

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Has any estimate been prepared by the State railway engineers in consultation with the Commonwealth Railway Department for continuing the 4ft. 8½in. gauge from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle? 2, If so, what was the estimated cost?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, £5,500,000, on basis 1935 costs.

MOTION—COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [2.20]: I move—

That the following members be appointed to serve on the sessional Committees during the present session:—

Standing Orders.—The President, the Chief Secretary, Hon. J. Cornell, Hon. C. F. Baxter, and Hon. H. S. W. Parker.

Library.—The President, Hon. C. F. Baxter, and Hon. E. M. Heenan.

Printing.—The President, Hon. E. H. Gray, and Hon. W. J. Mann.

Joint House.—The President, Hon. J. Cornell, Hon. E. H. Gray, Hon. V. Hamersley, and Hon. G. W. Miles.

HON. G. B. WILLIAMS (South): I am opposing the motion.

Point of Order.

Hon. J. Cornell: I rise to a point of order.

The President: Mr. Williams will resume his seat.

Hon. J. Cornell: Will the hon. member not—

Hon. C. B. Williams: Is the hon. member in order? Is he not anticipating anything I might have to say?

The President: The hon. member said that he was opposing the motion.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Am I to be stopped from opposing the motion? I may have good grounds for doing so.

The President: I think Mr. Cornell is entitled to raise a point of order.

Hon. J. Cornell: The point I wish to raise is this: If Mr. Williams or any other member is permitted to debate the motion, will it

cease to be formal? Would not that be a violation of Standing Order 15, which provides that no business beyond what is of a formal character or unopposed shall be entered upon before the Address-in-reply has been adopted?

Hon. C. B. Williams: I would like your ruling on that point, Sir. I have a further motion to move, should it be necessary. I could move that the appointment of these committees be adjourned until after the Address-in-reply has been adopted. I bow to your direction, as I have done on many other occasions.

The President: It is true that Standing Order 15 states that no business beyond what is of a formal character or unopposed shall be entered upon before the Address-in-reply has been adopted; but Standing Order 34 provides that at the commencement of each session the Council shall appoint certain members to serve on the standing committees. I therefore rule that Mr. Williams is in order, because the action he has taken is subject to the proviso to Standing Order 15.

Debate Resumed.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: At the outset I wish to assure the Honorary Minister, Mr. Hamersley, Mr. Cornell and Mr. Miles that there is nothing personal in this matter. It may be said that I should raise my objection against certain members, but I do not intend to do that. However, I have my duty to do to the public of this country. We delegate the functions of this House to the members elected to these committees. My argument now is against the House Committee. It has been elected year in and year out. What I have to say may have repercussions in many ways.

The price of meals in Parliament House—and you, Mr. President, can go back 30 years, Mr. Hamersley 38 years and Mr. Cornell about 30 years—has been during that time 1s. 6d. The basic wage in those days was about 7s. or 8s. and today it is 100 per cent. higher. Members of Parliament today are still getting their meals at the same price as in 1912. As far as I can judge, by comparing the cost with that of meals away from this building, the taxpayer must be paying 9d. or 10d. for every meal a member of Parliament has here. It is hard to get comparative figures because at a restaurant one takes what is served in the way of meat,

or whatever is ordered. We certainly get more vegetables here than in public restaurants, but that has changed in the last few days. I believe potatoes are now rationed here, although some are being grown in the garden. We may get a bag as a result of that crop. Then there are wages for two men to be met.

Some of us in this Parliament drink. If any hon. member burkes me I will make this a personal matter, but I do not desire to do that. During the long time I have been a member there have been periods when I did not waste any money on drink, but used to lecture others on the evils of it. We used to get good whisky for 6d. when at the outside hotels it was 1s. Then our bulk whisky went up to 9d. and Scotch and other whiskies have increased to 11d. In hotels they are now only 1s. 1d.—where they can be procured. I want it made known that those of us members of Parliament who do choose to drink other than tea which is manufactured in syphilitic and leprous countries, have to pay. We prefer to drink whisky, brandy, or other alcoholic liquors. Parliament House pays no license fee, yet we have to pay within 2d. of what we pay for similar liquor outside. At the same time the teetotaler can use that bar for the purpose of changing his cheques. He can also have his meals at the same price as 30 years ago. The Government apparently thinks that is right, because it goes on appointing these committees irrespective of what they do.

I cast no reflections on the manager of the dining room. Unfortunately he has been very sick. He knows his business, and so does the staff. He, after all, is guided by the committee and is only a nominal secretary. I am opposed to the House Committee. Very few of the members come near the place. You, Mr. President, come here nearly every day, and the Speaker, in another place, is nearly always here too. I am not, however, concerned with the other place. We see the other members of that committee when Parliament meets. In ordinary times when Parliament is not sitting we rarely see them. I know it is pretty rough to have to say this, but I make it quite clear on behalf of myself and others —

The Chief Secretary: Speak for yourself.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: There are others all right. The Government has got itself into a quandary because too many wowzers are included in it. We have to stand four square with members of the Government rather than put them where they ought to be, because they study their personal interests and not those of their political party. I have no objection to paying for what I get. I can manage to do that although at times it has been a bit hard. I do not drink much beer; I would not drink a bottle a month, but what do we find here—that the House Committee has reduced the size of the glass of beer by 25 per cent., but is still charging the same price. How can the workers growl at hotelkeepers when they find that practice sanctioned in Parliament House? The committee did not tell members what it had done, but still the person who does not patronise the bar can get his meals today at the old price, notwithstanding the fact that the cost of every vegetable he consumes has gone up by 25 to 50 per cent. Potatoes are now rationed to about 3lbs. per person, and tea has gone up in price, but the House Committee has made no increase there. It has at no time said to the people who patronise the dining room, including myself, that they should contribute a bit towards the deficit caused by politicians having meals at Parliament House. But it has seen that every increase in the bar, including soft drinks, has been passed on to the consumer of liquor. The tea drinker, however, has not been charged any more and the taxpayer in this State has to pay the 50 to 100 per cent. increase in cost of tea in the case of members dining here, and also has to bear the additional cost of the lettuce and other vegetables consumed.

Why is that? If it were not for the fifth columnists—the wowzers—in this country causing trouble between the different classes of people, I would be inclined to insist upon the closing of the bar at Parliament House. Then we would find that people who get meals at the price paid 30 years ago would have to pay at least double. I am tired of having slung at me wherever I go the statement that members of Parliament get everything free of charge. I am told that we do not pay income-tax and that we do not pay for food or drink at Parliament House. I do not worry about statements of that kind; but it is wrong that some members of the House Committee, out of the session, should

come to Parliament House only when meetings of the committee are being held. I make an exception of the President, the Speaker, Mr. Stubbs and Mr. Wilson. I regret to have to bring this matter forward, but I must oppose the appointment of the members named unless they can explain why the members who drink alcoholic liquors, as well as cigarette smokers, should have to bear all the increased costs while the members who do not drink liquor but who make a convenience of the bar in order to change their private cheques free of charge, get their meals at the price that was charged many years ago. I cannot go back as far as Mr. Hamersley can—when he entered Parliament I was at school—but the price of meals was then 1s. 6d. and I think the salary worked out at about £3 17s. 2d. per week.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Members of Parliament were then getting £200 a year.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: At that time they had to pay 1s. 6d. for a meal. Since then the Parliamentary allowance has been increased 200 per cent. and members now receive £600 a year, less taxes, of course, though mugs outside think we do not pay taxes. Unless members of the House Committee can give favourable consideration to the members of Parliament who patronise the bar and are called upon to meet every increase, I shall not be satisfied. Lemons cost 2d. each and lettuces 4d. or 5d. each, and yet members can get a meal for 1s. 6d.! I am trying to refrain from introducing any venom into my remarks, but I say it is wrong that members who patronise the bar should have to pay every increase while others get their meals for 1s. 6d. as they did 30 years ago, notwithstanding the heavy increase in the cost of living. I had thought I would be able to bring this matter forward at a party meeting, but that was not possible. However, I have expressed my opinion fairly definitely. Nobody should be appointed a member of the House Committee unless he attends Parliament House frequently during the recess. It is of no use appointing members who just attend meetings and receive reports from the man in charge.

I have complained to you, Mr. President, and some of us have complained to the Speaker about the way in which mails are delivered to the House. A letter posted in Kalgoorlie on Friday does not reach the House until the following Tuesday. I asked the House Committee to provide a private

box so that members who so desired could get their letters at the G.P.O. on Saturday morning. Ordinarily a letter posted from Kalgoorlie on Friday and addressed to me care of the G.P.O., Perth, would be available on Saturday morning. This surely was a matter for the House Committee. I wrote to the committee but did not get the courtesy of a reply. Evidently it is quite useless to write to the committee. Kalgoorlie members while in Perth have to depend upon the local paper for news in order to keep in touch with their constituents, but the Kalgoorlie paper published on Saturday is not obtainable in Perth until Tuesday. Mr. W. R. Hall and I complained of this to you, Mr. President, and to the Speaker.

I regret having to waste time in airing these complaints, but it is obvious that members of Parliament who do not take alcoholic drink should not be permitted to live cheaply at my expense. If there is any loss to be made good, let the members who take nothing but meals at Parliament House share the loss with the drinkers. I have pointed out that when whisky was 1s. in town, the price here was 6d. It is now 1s. 1d. in town and 11d. here. Yet meals here are charged for at 1s. 6d. just as they were many years ago. Why should the Government put the increased costs solely on the members who patronise the bar? I am not jealous at not being nominated for the committee, though I could wish that I was a member of it. I do not want to be told that I am wrong in my statements because I am not wrong. I want to hear the committee's answer. If a mistake has been made and an undertaking is given that it will be rectified, well and good.

HON. J. CORNELL (South): I listened with considerable interest to the remarks of Mr. Williams. With the exception of 18 months of war service, I have been continuously a member of the House Committee since about 1914. I did not seek the position. During that long period I have never known one complaint to come before the House Committee. I think the same could be said of Mr. Miles, Mr. Hamersley, the Honorary Minister and yourself, Mr. President. Not one of us sought the position. No salary is attached to it, and we have no special privileges. Members of the committee have gone out of their way to come from the country to attend meetings. If Mr. Williams will look up the

roll of attendance all down the years of meetings of the House Committee, he will find it is very creditable to members and to this House. The hon. member seems to be under the impression that the committee cannot function and do its work unless members of it practically live on the premises. It is an honorary committee whose members are appointed by both Houses of Parliament. They are chosen at the beginning of each session. In the Comptroller, the House Committee has a capable executive officer. Practically all complaints to the House Committee would come through him, for he is the proper channel. It would then be his duty to report any such complaints to the House Committee, to be dealt with. What is the charge Mr. Williams has levelled against the House Committee? It is that too much is charged for alcoholic liquors and too little for food.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is so.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I would fix the same charges for members of Parliament as are fixed for people outside, but I venture to say that if the House Committee adopted that suggestion it would be deluged with complaints. Mr. Williams, too, would find himself standing alone. The House Committee has to make the best of the conditions as it finds them, and carry out its duties in a way that it feels is most suitable to all members of Parliament. No obligation is cast upon members to have either meals or drinks at Parliament House.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Meals would cost a great deal more if some members did not have them here.

Hon. J. CORNELL: A member can get all the liquor and meals he wants outside the precincts of Parliament House if he pays the price. The House Committee has been entrusted with the duty of endeavouring to provide liquor and meals within the precincts of the House under such conditions and upon such terms as will meet with the approval and approbation—I think they are freely given—of the general body of members.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Because most members do not patronise the bar, the public is really paying for their meals.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is no good Mr. Williams charging the House Committee with not, so to speak, putting it over those members who do not drink. Many members do not partake of meals here, but some of them are consistent supporters of the bar. The

hon. member has not given any credit to the House Committee nor has he uttered one expression in commendation of the work of the committee. One of the things the House Committee has done is to endeavour not to keep in step with the Arbitration Court in the payment of wages to employees or as to the conditions under which they work; it has always been one step ahead of that tribunal.

Hon. C. B. Williams: So it should be.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member did not pass any encomiums upon the House Committee for that. It has done what any good employer would do. Mr. Williams has complained about the delay in the delivery of mails. Both he and Mr. W. R. Hall spoke about the delay in receiving the "Kalgoorlie Miner." That matter has been thrashed out by the House Committee on more than one occasion, and I understand that an arrangement satisfactory to Mr. Williams has now been made. In my long connection with the House I have adopted the practice—about 90 per cent. of members of both Houses have also done that—of asking that my mails should be re-addressed to my place of residence.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is a simple matter.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I represent the South Province, and now live in the metropolitan area. I think that is also the case with you, Mr. President. I have never once had to complain about correspondence or telegrams being delayed in transit or about any consequent injury to the sender of those communications. I think that sentiment can be echoed by almost every member.

Hon. C. B. Williams: How many years have you had the telephone?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Mr. Williams could have a telephone too. I used to live at Midland Junction and was not connected with the telephone. I do not know that there is much in that argument. When Mr. Williams first raised the question, it was connected with labour on Saturday. At that time the employees were not here on Saturday.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is how you understand the position.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am sure of that. No civil servant worked on Saturday then. What the Government did for its employees, the House Committee endeavoured to do for its own employees. That was one reason why mails were not delivered as early

as formerly. The meals provided at Parliament House are out of all proportion to the charge.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. CORNELL: When we endeavour to compare the bar and refreshment room at Parliament House with outside institutions, we are confronted with the fact that the only overhead charge here is the wages paid. In the case of outside institutions, there are many other charges that have to be met. I do not know what the percentage of loss is in the dining-room. It is not very great, neither is the percentage of profit from the bar as great as is the percentage obtained by publicans in Perth. There is a vote on the Estimates each year for the House Committee. If the hon. member thinks the dining-room should not be subsidised, he has his remedy, in that he may move to have the vote cut out when we come to deal with the Appropriation Bill.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I just want to show you people up.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The House Committee looks to the Government for all repairs, renewals and alterations, which should be effected by the Public Works Department. The profits from the bar are kept in a separate account. I point out that the easy chairs which have been placed in the lobbies and corridors and other considerations too, for the comfort and convenience of members have been provided from that profit.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is what I have been trying to tell you.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Though the charge for liquor in the bar may be less than it is outside, we do not want to get into holts with the liquor trade by selling at greatly decreased prices owing to the fact that we pay no rental and have no license. Mr. Williams maintains that because meals are served at 1s. 6d., the cost of liquor should be reduced.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I point out that the price of liquor has gone up 100 per cent. The cost of whisky has risen from 6d. to 11d.—

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member means that the price should be greater.

Hon. C. B. Williams: While the price of meals has remained the same for about 30 years.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member states that the taxpayers have to find the

extra 9d. that members are not paying for their meals.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The cost should be 2s. 6d.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member will find himself very wide of the mark if we get down to actual calculations. If he wants to make himself popular—

Hon. C. B. Williams: No, I would be most unpopular.

Hon. J. CORNELL: —and desires to bring this matter to a climax, and if he thinks the price of meals is out of all proportion to what is provided, he has a simple remedy. There is no need for him to attack the House Committee. Let him take a petition amongst members of both Houses of Parliament and ask them to sign it, requesting the House Committee to charge the same price for meals as is charged outside. The House Committee will not take a census on the point. If there is any dissatisfaction about the price charged and a sufficient number of members of both Houses agree on that point, then I ask Mr. Williams to sponsor a petition, and the House Committee will have no objection to taking action accordingly.

Hon. C. B. Williams: If you applied that to the patronising of the bar, we would get our prices down.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Mr. Williams stated that some members used the bar merely for the purpose of cashing cheques there.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: So long as they are good cheques, that is all right.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There are many places where it is possible for cheques to be changed.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is why you do not come here very often.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I do not come here as a Paul Pry. We receive complaints not because smokers are overcharged but because there is not sufficient tobacco and cigarettes to meet requirements. Regarding tea, I think every hon. member knows there has been a fundamental change.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I am not complaining about tea.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The price of tea has not been increased, but the amount of tea available has been considerably diminished.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I understand that.

Hon. J. CORNELL: All things considered, the record of the House Committee is very creditable. If a calculation were

made of the work of the various committees and the number of times the members attend meetings, it would be found that there are only two that matter—the Printing Committee and the House Committee. Of course it is open to Mr. Williams to move an amendment providing for other members to be placed on the committees.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I would sooner that you took my protest to heart and did something.

HON. G. W. MILES (North): I do not altogether agree with some of Mr. Cornell's remarks and Mr. Williams is to be thanked for bringing this question before the House. I interpret Mr. Williams's remarks as suggesting that the price of meals is not sufficiently high in comparison with the increased cost. He is not complaining about the price of liquor.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I will pay!

Hon. G. W. MILES: The House Committee should review the price of meals, but not as Mr. Cornell suggested by taking a round robin to members with a view to ascertaining whether they are satisfied. It is not a question of satisfying members. The taxpayers of the country have to foot the bill.

Hon. A. Thomson: Are the taxpayers paying? What is the loss?

Hon. G. W. MILES: If the overhead expenses are taken into consideration, there is a considerable loss, and members of Parliament should know that the price charged is ridiculously low.

Hon. W. J. Mann: The House Committee should be able to tell us the loss.

Hon. G. W. MILES: That can easily be done if notice is given. Money has to be provided in wages for the dining room and bar staff in addition to other expenses. What Mr. Williams says is perfectly true. Members are getting meals under cost and the taxpayers have to foot the bill.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I am glad you are honest.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The House Committee should give consideration to the question.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Why has it not done so?

Hon. G. W. MILES: The majority rules in the House Committee, the same as in this House, and I have not always been of the same opinion as the majority and am not likely to be. The question has been

raised at the House Committee meetings from time to time, but the House Committee in its wisdom thought it was doing the right thing. My opinion is that Mr. Williams is right and the House Committee has not adopted the correct procedure in not increasing the price of meals. I hope the matter will be given consideration by the committee in the future.

HON. SIR HAL COLEBATCH (Metropolitan): I had no intention of speaking on this motion but since a debate has been started I consider I should be neglecting my duty if I did not make to the Chief Secretary a suggestion that I hope he may take note of when the time comes for appointing further committees. I am not particularly interested in the discussion that has arisen except that I agree entirely with the remarks of Mr. Miles. That may be a selfish attitude because I am not altogether a frequent patron of the dining-room and occasionally visit the bar. What I suggest is that it would be a very good plan to introduce from time to time on to the different committees some of the newer members of the House.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: Not that they will be any better than those at present serving on the committees, but it is a good thing to get newer members interested in all forms of our Parliamentary procedure, and persuade them to take an interest in the various committees. To my mind—and I am sure Mr. Cornell will not misunderstand me—for a man to be for 38 years a member of the House Committee—

Hon. J. Cornell: Nobody has been there as long as that.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I think the hon. member said that in 1914 he became a member of the committee and now it is 1942. That is 38 years.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Twenty-eight years.

Hon. J. Cornell: I was a member during that period except for 18 months when I was on active service.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I am quite sure that no other member could possibly do the work better than Mr. Cornell has done it, but it is desirable that each year one new member should be introduced to each of the committees in order that new ideas might be expressed. So far as the personnel of the present committees are concerned, they have done excellent work.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I am not concerned about them.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: At the same time it is a mistake for members to remain on committees for such long periods and it will be better if changes are made. The Standing Orders Committee, the Printing Committee and the House Committee are composed of members entirely suited for the job, but I think that some change might very well be made in the Library Committee. I do not suggest that the library suffers because we are fortunate in having a librarian of exceptional ability who has a great interest in and enthusiasm for his work. Apart from yourself, Mr. President, the committee includes Mr. Baxter, who is a very busy man and is also a member of another committee. I do not think, with the exception of the President and Chairmen of Committees and the Ministers, that there is any occasion whatever for a member to have a seat on two committees. There is no excuse for that. The third member of the committee is Mr. Heenan who lives a long way from Perth. When committees are proposed next year, I suggest that new blood should be introduced and that newer members should be given an opportunity to serve.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having enabled this discussion to take place. I would remind members that only last year I endeavoured to initiate a debate, not exactly on the lines suggested by Mr. Williams, but at all events with a view to bringing about an alteration such as was suggested by Sir Hal Colebatch. I was blocked last year by a quotation from the Standing Orders by the Chairman of Committees. Incidentally, it is a bad thing for discussion to be blocked in that way! However, Sir, you have enabled my difficulty to be overcome, very rightly in my opinion. Instead of Mr. Cornell's having made charges against Mr. Williams—I am sure the hon. member will not mind my saying this—he would have been better advised to adopt the attitude taken by his colleague on the House Committee, Mr. Miles. Mr. Williams said that every nitwit outside Parliament thought that members received everything here for nothing.

We can afford to ignore what nitwits think, but I have had it from people who are

anything but nitwits that their belief is that not only do we obtain food and drink here free of cost but that Parliament is a house of accommodation, that we have our bedrooms here. Many people who should know better think that members of Parliament pay for nothing. I have been seriously asked by numbers of people whether we pay income-tax. Only last week I was told by a businessman in this city that we did not come under the various deductions. He said, "If you State chaps do, the Federal members do not."

Hon. C. B. Williams: They do.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: This discussion is all to the good. If I could have succeeded with what was in my mind last year, this debate would have been avoided. We are spending public money here and members have a right to know how it is being spent. A balance sheet should be submitted to members. Does the bar show a profit? If it does, we should know what the profit is. Does the dining-room show a loss?

Hon. C. B. Williams: Yes, definitely.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: We should know what that loss is. I am sure that no member wants his meal at the expense of the bar, and no member wants a drink at the expense of the dining-room. With all deference, I ask why a balance sheet should not be published so that we might know how much we are getting from the taxpayers. I am one of those who believe that we should not get anything from them. We receive an allowance, fixed by members of Parliament before I was elected, and we also have provided for us stationery, stamps, and a building where we can write our letters. Everything else we should pay for. The sooner this is adopted the better it will be for Parliament, because of the misconception that exists. I do not think I am far wrong in saying that 50 per cent. of the people outside think that we get everything for nothing, but that is not so. I congratulate Mr. Williams upon having brought the matter forward, though I have nothing against any of the committees. I have here the bound volumes of "Hansard" and I shall have a word to say to the Printing Committee about absolutely unwarranted expense involved in issuing those volumes. That, however, is by the way.

I congratulate Mr. Williams on having had the courage to say what he did and I consider that the more members we can

educate in the affairs of this Parliament the better it will be. Take the temporary Chairmen of Committees; the same men are appointed year in, and year out. What has happened? One of our temporary Chairmen has been called away on active service. We have a member of this House who is not here today—I am only saying what other members have said—

Hon. J. Cornell: You are not always here yourself.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: —who is a man of considerable ability and he has been appointed a temporary Chairman. As we have men of that calibre in the House we should avail ourselves of the opportunity to use their ability and should not fail to give them the chance to educate themselves in Parliamentary procedure and accept their share in the conduct of the House, which is every member's right. I do not want to see the present committee go out of office. I would not vote for that, but I do congratulate Mr. Williams upon having raised this question.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East): I deplore the discussion that has taken place on this matter. If any fault is to be found it must lie at the door of the House Committee and Mr. Miles must accept his share of the responsibility. I do not think there is any member of Parliament who has any desire to obtain meals at the cost of the bar.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You do not patronise the bar very much; you are getting your meals 25 per cent. cheaper than you would get them elsewhere.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member will allow Mr. Thomson to continue his remarks.

Hon. A. THOMSON: There is an impression that members who do not patronise the bar obtain their meals at a cheaper price than that which they should pay.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is very definite; you know it is so, and so does everyone else.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am safe in saying that of those interested in hotel businesses, very few look for much profit, if any, from their dining-rooms. I regret the tone adopted during the course of this debate.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You are making it worse!

Hon. A. THOMSON: I strongly resent the assertion being conveyed to the outside

world that members of Parliament secure meals at the expense of the taxpayers.

Hon. C. B. Williams: And that is true.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I say it is not correct. Until the House Committee can prove otherwise, I refuse to believe such an assertion. When I was a member of that committee the desire was to average the supplies to members at prices as near to cost as possible, without making any profit at all. Mr. Cornell has told us that considerable improvements have been made with regard to furniture and other matters.

Hon. C. B. Williams: True, at the expense of the bar.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The bar does not pay taxes, rates or anything else. This is the first time this point has been raised for very many years and the contention has been advanced that we should look for profits at the expense of members themselves. Certainly I strongly resent the suggestion that those who patronise the dining-room are catered for at the expense of the general taxpayers. If that is really the position, then the remedy is in the hands of the House Committee. The tone of the debate has been derogatory to Parliament itself.

Members: Hear, hear!

HON. L. B. BOLTON (Metropolitan): I support the suggestion advanced by Sir Hal Colebatch. I am not concerned as to whether we get too much for our money in the dining-room and too little in the bar. I am surprised to know that a profit is derived from the bar, but I understand from the remarks of Mr. Cornell that any such profit is expended in the repair of furniture and in effecting other improvements.

Hon. J. Cornell: Some of the money goes in that direction.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I am surprised to know there is a profit in the bar while there is a loss in the dining-room. I do not think any member will contradict me when I say that very few clubs in the city or in the outer areas make a profit in their dining-rooms but most of them derive profits from the bar takings. Those profits are usually treated as an offset against the loss in the dining-room. That should also apply in Parliament House.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The proposition is different here. Wages are not charged up against the bar or the dining-room. The

Government provides the money for wages, and that means the taxpayers have to find it.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: In that case I suggest that there should be no loss respecting either the bar or the dining-room. It would be impossible to get better meals than those provided for members at Parliament House, but I would be extremely sorry to think that the general taxpayer should be called upon to make up any shortage in the expenditure involved. I certainly do not desire a meal for 1s. 6d. which costs the Government 1s. 9d., nor do I think any other member would want one under those conditions.

Hon. A. Thomson: No.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I do not suggest taking the business out of the hands of the Chief Secretary, but I think the members of the various committees should be elected by ballot. We have had Mr. Cornell on a committee for 28 years—if I may correct Sir Hal on the point—and if we are satisfied with his services, we can retain him on the committee for another 28 years. On the other hand if we desire a change, we can secure that result. Mr. Williams is to be commended for bringing the matter forward, especially seeing that he has opened up a subject that I have frequently heard discussed in the corridors. Perhaps this discussion may bring the matter to a head.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (in reply): I deprecate exceedingly the manner in which this matter has been ventilated. Mr. Williams has been most unfair, not only to members of the House Committee, but to members generally. In the first place I would remind him that the sessional committees are not appointed by the Government and therefore it is futile for him to charge the Government along the lines he indicated today.

Hon. C. B. Williams: If I desire to level charges at the Government, there is a lot more I could charge it with than I have mentioned today.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The House Committee is charged with the responsibility of controlling the affairs of Parliament House generally.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Who nominated them, if not the Government?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The House Committee controls not only the bar but other activities associated with the institu-

tion. The custom over many years ever since I have been a member of the House is for every section of members to be represented as nearly as possible on all sessional committees.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Does the Government select the members of those committees or are they selected by some other means?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They are not selected by the Government.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Does the Labour Party select them? Do not tell me that!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Williams does not know what he is talking about. It is about time he displayed a little more sense of responsibility than he does when he makes such a remark.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I have some sense of responsibility and will tell you something more.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must ask Mr. Williams to obey the Chair and to cease interjecting.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I always do that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not indulging in personalities.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You had better keep off that.

The PRESIDENT: I must ask Mr. Williams to cease interjecting.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I am not interjecting; I am merely talking to the Minister privately.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It must be made clear that members of the House themselves elect their representatives on the various committees.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is quite possible for —

Hon. C. B. Williams: Order! Mr. President, here is another member interjecting!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: At any time members can suggest some other method of appointing the various committees. Some do not wish to act on committees.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I am one of them.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Williams, by interjection, says he is one of them. He is prepared to criticise the other fellow, but is not willing to shoulder his responsibilities. If members are dissatisfied with the existing procedure, there are other means by which they can effect changes. Some members of committees have held their positions for years and have suggested they should be replaced by others, yet difficulty has been experienced in securing others to assume their

positions. In the circumstances we have carried on under the present method for many years.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is not to say it is right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Those who have been nominated have agreed to act, and that is the method we have adopted in the past. They are approached beforehand. When changes are necessary because of the death of a member or perhaps arising out of a defeat at an election, the custom has been to invite another member holding the same sectional views as the departed individual to fill the vacancy. I can see nothing wrong with that procedure. Dealing specifically with the complaint made by Mr. Williams, as far as I know it is customary, particularly in the hotel trade, for losses to be experienced in the dining-room business.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You are now speaking on behalf of the House Committee.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not

Hon. C. B. Williams: Of course you are.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The custom in the hotel business is for the losses associated with the dining-room to be made up from the profits derived from the bar trade. If we apply that position to the House Committee we must recognise that the dining-room and the bar constitute a joint concern.

Hon. C. B. Williams: With a 50 per cent increase in one and nothing in the other.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I regret that the hon. member should take up such an attitude. I have merely adopted the usual procedure that has been followed ever since I entered this Chamber. If members generally desire a change in the method adopted, I am prepared to fall into line. I regret the tone of the discussion and trust that the misrepresentation that has been indulged in will certainly not reach the outside public.

Hon. C. B. Williams: On a point of order! I object to that statement. The Chief Secretary said something about misrepresentation. I am not misrepresenting the position, and one member of the House Committee backed up what I said.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I did not understand the Chief Secretary to say that the misrepresentation was intentional.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The Minister spoke about misrepresentation. Let him be man enough to say he did.

The **PRESIDENT**: The intention of the Chief Secretary was to indicate that the statements, from his point of view, were not correct.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I am sorry, Mr. President, that you are making the speech for the Chief Secretary who is quite capable of doing it himself.

The **PRESIDENT**: Order!

The **CHIEF SECRETARY**: I have little to add to what I have already said. If members desire a different method to be followed in appointing the various committees, I shall willingly fall into line.

Hon. J. Cornell: All that is necessary is to carry a resolution instructing the Standing Orders Committee to frame a new Standing Order to deal with the position.

The **CHIEF SECRETARY**: The method usually followed has proved satisfactory in the past.

Question put and passed.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1), £2,350,000.

First Reading.

Bill received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, resolved—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the Supply Bill to pass through its remaining stages at one sitting.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY [3.32] in moving the second reading said: This is the usual Bill to provide supply for financing the operations of the State until the Estimates have been passed. Estimates are now being prepared, and will be presented to the Chamber as early as practicable. The amounts asked for in this session's No. 1 Supply Bill, with comparative figures from last year's measure, are as follows:—

	1942.	1941.
Consolidated Revenue Fund	£1,850,000	£1,850,000
General Loan Fund ..	200,000	350,000
Advance to Treasurer	300,000	300,000
	<u>£2,350,000</u>	<u>£2,500,000</u>

Owing to the war, loan expenditure has been curtailed to essential requirements. Consequently the provision in the present

Supply Bill has been reduced by £150,000 as against the amount asked for in the No. 1 Supply Bill of last year from the General Loan Fund. Otherwise the amounts now sought are the same as those granted last year. Every effort is made to keep expenditure down to essential requirements, a close scrutiny being maintained by the Treasury on all departmental undertakings. The exigencies of war, however, have occasioned increased expenditure to the extent of £93,060, made up as follows:—

	£
Air Raid Precautions	6,375
Protection of essential services ..	18,246
Superannuation contributions on behalf of the State employees enlisted for Military, Naval or Air Force	13,230
Concession railway fares to soldiers	39,168
Emergency reserve stock administration	2,263

General incidental items account for the balance. An amount of £1,781,674, not including disbursements under Special Acts, was expended in the first three months of last year out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The expenditure under Special Acts includes interest and sinking fund payments. The amount asked for out of the General Loan Fund is to meet essential services in conformity with arrangements with the Commonwealth Government. The Advance to Treasurer is to meet expenditure for immediate needs that cannot, for the time being, be charged to votes or accounts. The estimated deficit for last year was £198,297; but, by careful scrutiny of expenditure, together with increased revenue, the year's actual operations resulted in a surplus of £1,768. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. CORNELL (South): Before the second reading is put, I would like to make one or two points in connection with the Bill. Reference has been made to the fact that the year closed with a surplus—true, a very small one, less than last year's; some £1,700 as against £11,000 odd last year. It has also been said that for the first time, as Mr. Moore put it, since 1903 the public debt has been reduced—a “notable achievement,” the hon. member termed it. In 1903 the surplus was achieved by the Western Australian Government solely, whereas last year's surplus represents an achievement under the Financial Agreement. We have to

consider how much the Federal authorities contributed towards last year's surplus.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We have to thank the Loan Council for having cut down our borrowing.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The surplus is a result of the Financial Agreement. In 1903 this was a solvent State, and therefore it is to be presumed that the public debt was reduced solely out of revenue. Mr. Miles considers that we should thank the Loan Council for the present achievement, but there is this extraordinary phase resulting from the war: Prior to this war, and for a couple of years since it broke out, the Commonwealth Government had thumping surpluses and all the State Governments had thumping deficits. It has remained for a war to alter the position.

Despite the reduction of loan expenditure by the Loan Council, and despite the fact that the Commonwealth is down £200,000,000 in its budget, each of the States had a surplus. I understand that the South Australian surplus exceeds that State's Federal grant which was over £1,000,000. Tasmania budgeted for a deficit of £156,000 and had a surplus of £1,500. New South Wales had a surplus of £900,000, whereas that State's accumulated deficit over 10 years exceeded £16,000,000. To endeavour to make political capital for any party out of a State surplus would be absolutely wrong, and would have a boomerang effect. In all the States, irrespective of parties at the helm, there has been a surplus; but in the Federal arena, where Labour is now paramount, there is a deficit of £200,000,000. Thus no political party can make political capital out of the Federal deficit or a State surplus. From a Federal Minister we had a statement that in New South Wales the unemployed now numbered less than 1,600, and were mostly of such an age as to be unacceptable in up-to-date industry. Their feelings were salved by the suggestion that since they could not be employed in the war effort, other employers would give them jobs. We have reached the extraordinary situation that what was at one time held to be incapable of practical solution has been solved the world over by the greatest war in history. Today in any civilised country no one who wants work need be without it.

Next as regards the mining industry. Few people realised what was going to happen

to that industry when the men engaged in it were called up. I have discussed this matter with Mr. Williams, who knows more of the ins and outs and ramifications of labour in mining than any other member of the Chamber. What Mr. Williams said to me has evidently come to pass, that the calling-up of men engaged in connection with mining would not work out as many people expected it to operate in regard to age groups. That is to say, when the men up to 35 years were called up and there was a show-down, many of the men beyond that age could not do the work required of them. In today's "West Australian" we have a sorry spectacle presented to us by the Allied Works Council. In the 35 to 45 years age group, many men were found to be medically unfit to do the work required of them by the Allied Works Council. That means it will be necessary to call up more men in the group below 35 years of age.

The goldmining industry is doomed if the present proposals are proceeded with. I am not so much concerned about the men taken from the industry and placed at work by the Allied Works Council. I am, however, concerned about the section of the mining community which, as a result, has practically had to walk out and leave all its possessions. If any section of the community is making a sacrifice in the interests of the war effort, it is that section. As Sir Hal Colebatch said yesterday, we do not know what to do with them. Where are they going, and how are they to be employed? Perhaps it is not so much a question of employment; these people have lost what they have gathered in a lifetime, household furniture and everything else. I hope our Government will press the Commonwealth Government not to deplete further the manpower in our goldmining industry. Hundreds of men left the industry while the going was good; they went elsewhere and obtained employment. The result is that those who stuck to the industry will be left to fend for themselves. I support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Bill read a third time, and *passed*.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.*Third Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [3.52]: Before speaking to the Address-in-reply, I desire to make reference to the sad loss sustained by our old friend, Mr. Drew, and to express the great sympathy which I, and I am sure every member of this House, feels for him. Mr. Drew is an old and respected member of this Chamber and has been an example to us all. His home life has always been of an exemplary nature and he must consequently feel his loss keenly.

I join with other members in welcoming our two new colleagues, who I have no doubt will faithfully carry out their duties. They come to us fresh from their own spheres of life and will probably place new views before us. Changes are taking place and we older members are inclined to get into a rut. At times people may consider that I am growing a little old for the job and am not up to date.

Hon. G. B. Wood: You talked about a revolution last session.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We are living in extraordinary times and no doubt will feel the benefit of new blood. I am confident our two new members will do their utmost to help us in the performance of our duties. The Speech mentions that we are entering upon extraordinary and serious times. This Parliament will therefore be called upon to deal with serious and changed conditions. I congratulate the Government upon the stand it took in testing the validity of the Commonwealth uniform taxation legislation. Unquestionably, the decision of the High Court will have to stand; there will be no appeal against it. Therefore, the uniform taxation legislation will continue for the war period and for some time thereafter. I have always understood that once a State loses control of the purse its position becomes hopeless. I am reminded of the wonderful and glorious period of ten years this State enjoyed after it obtained responsible government. That was the most progressive and glorious time Western Australia ever experienced. Unfortunately, we were drawn into Federation, and from that time onwards we have been in troubled waters. We lost control of our finances—tariff, postal, and excise—and that put back the hands of the clock in Western Australia.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Australia has not done very much since Federation; its population is only 7,000,000.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Western Australia's population would have increased considerably but for the fact that it entered Federation. Attempts were made thereafter to stop the drift of population from the State. A land settlement policy was pushed for all it was worth. The question was whether we could keep the people here. It was thought that a land settlement policy would tie them to the land, and that when production increased we should have not only sufficient for ourselves, but a surplus to export. A migration policy was adopted to induce people to settle in this State in order to keep it afloat. Now we are working under different conditions, because we have lost the opportunity to tax our people and must be content with whatever amount the Commonwealth Government may think fit to dole out to us. We shall be in a worse plight, in my opinion, than we were in the Crown Colony days. The late Alfred Deakin foreshadowed what would happen when he wrote these words—

As the power of the purse in Great Britain established by degrees the authority of the Commons, it will ultimately establish in Australia the authority of the Commonwealth.

The rights of self-government of the States have been fondly supposed to be safeguarded by the Constitution. It has left them legally free, but financially bound to the chariot wheels of the Central Government. There need will be its opportunity. The least populous will first succumb; those smitten by drought or similar misfortunes will follow; and finally even the greatest and most prosperous will, however reluctantly, be brought to heel.

Those words were prophetic. We have come to that serious position, and the whole of Australia will feel the pinch, and particularly this State. We have the largest area and the smallest population of the mainland States. It is the distance that separates us from the East which leaves us in the unfortunate position that we are hardly recognised as belonging to the same country. We will be in the category of "country cousins." We will have to battle hard for whatever crumbs are left over when it comes to finance.

Hon. W. J. Mann: We are the poor relations.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We are. The decision has gone against us, and the die is cast. I do not see how we can dream of

this country's future. The population is depleted now because of the war, and when the war is over the men returning here, I fear, will find that we will be in such a serious plight that they will go to the Eastern States where all the funds and the whole of the taxation will be gathered together, and they will go on building up. I can see nothing ahead of us to encourage our people to remain here. However, that is something with which we shall have to grapple, I hope, in the near future, but from the outlook of the war it may not be for a long time. It is not a question with which we will have to deal just yet. Many millions of money will be spent throughout Australia on the prosecution of this war. There will be opportunities for many people in the Eastern States to build up secondary industries, but unfortunately those opportunities do not present themselves here in connection with manufacturing for war purposes. The industries that have started because of the war will, at the conclusion of hostilities, face a very serious time. Those concerns will probably have to turn their attention to something else, and it is doubtful whether this State will have the funds to enable them to embark on a programme of work that will permit them to employ large numbers of men.

I hope that the war will terminate earlier than was predicted or hinted at in an earlier session by Mr. Seddon, who said that we must remember that some wars had lasted 30 years. It is quite within the bounds of possibility that this will be an extremely long war. If we are to regain control of all those countries that we had prior to the war it will take a long time indeed. Australia is not making the best effort. Large numbers of strikes occur in the coalmines of the Eastern States. They are a decided reflection on the endeavours of our soldiers who, at all times, put up a splendid fight. It is very sad for these men, and the people of Australia to see all these strikes which take place week in week out, month in month out, and year in year out. They affect the output of Australia in more directions than simply the war effort. It is beyond my comprehension, because when appeals were made to pass the arbitration and conciliation laws of Australia—and we had them here as well as in the Eastern States—the workers claimed that they would abide by all the clauses and details of the

measures. Yet now that they have been passed, and improved from time to time by amendments, the workers still say they have the right to strike and throw the whole country into chaos—and that is what has happened right through the piece.

No Government seems to have grappled with the position. They are evidently afraid to see that the law is carried out. I have been given to understand that, whenever fines have been inflicted on these organised workers for striking and not obeying the law, in no case have the men been called upon to pay them as it was feared that there would be another strike because a demand had been made upon them to pay fines that had been legally imposed. We have many strikes each year, but I look upon the strikes in the coalmines as something to the discredit of the Federal Government, no matter what party is in power. That Government has now taken control of the whole of Australia. These people are doing more for the defeat of Australia than for the welfare of the country or the winning of the war. Mr. Wood referred to the tragedy of the men on the land, and said that they were being practically forced from their holdings. I look upon them as the salt of the earth. They are producing something, and are not always on strike. They are constantly appealing for some consideration, which is always promised to them, but all they receive is the hard dry crust.

Just recently I perused copies of letters requesting the department not to enforce the rates which had been levied for water supplies. In spite of these appeals the water had been cut off because of the non-payment of rates. The non-payment is due to the fact that one department does not dovetail in with another. One department deals with the water rates and another possesses all the funds that these people gained in the previous season. It is holding the money and will not allow the water rates, or other rates and taxes, to be paid. The individuals concerned are thus in a parlous condition seeing that their water is cut off and their stock dying. The only thing left for them to do is to walk off their places, and hundreds of them have already done that. The few left, in some localities, intend to leave their properties because there is nothing left for them to do. Their farms then become a greater menace to the people who remain. If the ground

is left untilled and uncared for it becomes a breeding ground for rabbits, and, more particularly, for the grasshopper which, in the past, has done endless harm to many settlers. In some instances they have not been able to carry on. It is unfortunate that numbers of people have left their properties. The young folk have gone and the old ones cannot carry on. Many farmers have reverted to horses. It is time that the Government held its hand, instead of making conditions worse.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Do you say that the water has been cut off?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Yes. One man has written to his son telling him to walk off. He advised the Government to take over the stock because the water had been cut off and the animals could not be watered. An instance occurred only yesterday, but this sort of thing has been going on year in and year out. The trouble is that there is not the co-operation that should exist between Government departments. In many instances the farmers are in trouble because of the difficulties occasioned by the war. Labour is short and elderly people cannot effectively look after stock and safeguard lambs from foxes. In spite of all the promises made from time to time, it is still difficult to obtain the requisite manpower. Where farmers have stock and water, they can make some pretence at holding the property until their sons return from the war. Neighbours help one another considerably, but there are many complaints about the difficulty of getting labour to put in and take off crops, to shear the sheep and milk the cows. It will be a sad position for Western Australia if the countryside is laid waste in the way I have mentioned.

I am pleased that the Commonwealth decided to drop the proposal to limit profits to four per cent. Had the proposal been adopted, it would have been one of the greatest blights that could have fallen on this State. We should resent any interference with the people who have money to invest. Unless people of means can see a chance of getting a profitable return, they are not likely to embark their money in any venture, especially if it necessitates the employment of labour. If a Government official was empowered to sit over them and prescribe that, when they were successful in their investments, their profits should be

limited to four per cent., nobody would invest in any enterprise. Many concerns have failed and investors have lost the whole of their capital. Consequently many people expect to receive six, eight or ten per cent. on their investments, but many ventures that promised substantial returns have not shown any profit. I have known some concerns to carry on for 30 years without paying dividends for many years. The hands employed received their wages, but the men who provided the money did not receive any return. I feel sure that if profits were restricted to four per cent., nobody would risk money on any investment in Australia. We should be pleased that the Commonwealth Government has decided not to interfere. It would have been a rash experiment and I feel that the Commonwealth has been wise to say good-bye to that proposal.

I indorse the remarks of Mr. Parker regarding the prevalence of vice in this country. Another matter to which frequent reference has been made in various quarters has been the amount of petty and even serious thieving taking place throughout the State. Every day we read reports indicative of the fact that some people cannot control their actions. Whether this is due to some fault of the teaching in our schools or lack of proper training in the homes, I do not know. Sometimes I think the trouble is largely due to young people having too much money to spend and having dropped into a careless way of life and failed to realise the responsibility devolving upon them to earn out useful lives for themselves. They certainly do not appreciate the responsibility of being members of a community in a country such as Australia could be if they followed a straight and honest course. Such people have been helping themselves to motor cars, using them and often wrecking them, apparently quite indifferent to the condition in which they abandoned the stolen property. We must seek a remedy for these misdeeds, and I think it would be well if more drastic fines were inflicted or heavier sentences were meted out to offenders. If the culprits were placed at solid work for a period in order that they might refund to the community the loss they had inflicted, it would have a deterrent effect. To me it is dreadful that such offences should have become so prevalent in the community. It is something we must

all deplore and a stage has been reached when a remedy should be sought.

The consensus of opinion seems to be that over-indulgence in strong drink is largely accountable for this state of affairs. Efforts have been made to curtail drinking, and the fairly stringent restrictions imposed should be productive of good. I hope the military authorities will exercise closer control over members of the Forces. I gather that wherever our troops have been—it grieves me to have to express these views—they have made a bad name for themselves. We should take notice of what is happening and endeavour to check these evils. We must endeavour to help our young people to exercise greater control, emulate what their forefathers did and do their utmost to make Australia the country it should be. I trust that our labours will benefit the people of the State and that we shall be able to achieve the desires expressed in His Excellency's Speech.

On motion by Hon. E. H. H. Hall, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The **CHIEF SECRETARY** [4.26]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 11th August.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.27 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 5th August, 1942.

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The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at 2.15 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—WHEAT.

As to Distillation Plant.

Mr. SEWARD asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Has any site been selected in this State on which to erect a wheat distillation plant? 2, If not, when is it expected that a site will be selected? 3, If a

site has been selected, has any work been done there, and how much; and when is it expected that the plant will be ready to start? 4, If a plant has been decided on, what amount of wheat per year will it handle, and what amount of power alcohol will it produce per year?

The **MINISTER** replied: 1, 2, 3 and 4. A site has been selected in Western Australia on which to erect a plant for the distillation of alcohol from wheat, and work has been commenced upon this project. It is the wish of the Commonwealth Government that all information in connection with the site, erection, and capacity of the plant should be regarded as strictly confidential.

PAPERS—MANPOWER POSITION.

Ministerial Statement.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS [2.21]:

I have here some papers in connection with the manpower position. It will be remembered that on the 14th May last a resolution on this subject was carried by the House. A letter was sent to the Prime Minister on the 16th May and a few days ago a reply was received dated the 30th July. That reply did not give the information I think this House should have, and consequently I have prepared some papers that bring the facts relating to the manpower position up-to-date in respect to our industries and embody reports from the Agricultural Department on our rural industries. I now ask that the papers be laid upon the Table of the House.

PRIVILEGE—PARLIAMENTARY NEWS.

As to Broadcasting.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [2.23]: Before the Orders of the Day are called there is a matter of privilege which I want to raise. I understand that questions submitted and answers given in this House are in the possession of the Speaker and are released by the Speaker for public information. Last night I was listening to the National Broadcasting Station and the announcer said that she was about to give the Parliamentary news. She then gave in detail the questions submitted by some members and the answers given. She referred to one question that I asked but the all-important one that I submitted, which is a matter affecting all the people